



MERCIA MARINA
http://www.merciamarina.co.uk/

Mercia Mercury

February 2013 Issue : 49

First Aid Evening

BE A LIFESAVER NOT A SPECTATOR



Derbyshire Save A Life Scheme is offering you the opportunity to learn emergency life support, free of charge.

Course Date: **Saturday 9th Feb** Time: **7pm - 9pm**
or **Monday 11th Feb**
Venue: **Willow Tree Tea Rooms**
To book a FREE place, or for further information, please contact:
Jules @merciamarina.co.uk 01283 703332
or call at the office.

The Derbyshire Save A Life Scheme info@derbysavesalife.co.uk 01433 850642 07562 786154

www.derbysavesalife.co.uk

Two evening sessions on basic first aid sessions have been arranged - one for the 9th and the other for the 11th of February. Both at the Willow Tree Tea Rooms. To book your free place, call in, telephone or email the Office. Numbers are limited so get in quick!

Boaters and Lodge Owners' Forum

Voting for the new Rep for Redshank, Sandpiper and Teal Pontoons closes on 3rd February. The name of the new Rep will be announced and he (both candidates are male) will be around to talk to all boaters on those Pontoons before too long. The Forum met on the 15th of January. The full Notes from the meetings are emailed out to all boaters and lodge owners for whom the Office has an address; a hard copy can be obtained from asking in the Office and a copy will also be put on the boards in the shower corridors. Do please read these and if you have anything you would like brought to the next meeting (9th April) talk to your Rep. If you would like to attend a meeting as an Observer, ask Robert. Because a number of people do not see the full Forum Notes, a summary of some of the issues discussed is included in this Newsletter. These are of general interest and the more people who are aware of them, the better.

Pub Development: Robert reported that the final contracts had yet to be signed. The build (with a local builder) was to start on the 4th of March with completion ready

for opening in March 2014. He hoped formal announcements and press releases would be within the next two weeks but it was still possible that the build would not go ahead. When the project was underway, the pub tenant was ready to come and talk to moorers at evenings in the Willows - to share the plans and arrangements and listen to feedback and opinions.

Additional Lighting: The additional lighting programme was underway and included the installation on FB1 to illuminate the pedestrian gate and on the semi-circular car park and sheds.

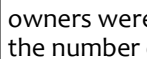
Elsan: The second Elsan would be sited by FB2. Its design and position were settled as was the builder. When planning permission came through, work could start on the new Elsan and the replacement/refurbishment of the current one.

Automatic Number Plate Recognition: The system had been tested and a camera would be installed to cover the main entrance/exit onto Findern Lane. Its purpose was to enhance Marina security and the recorded data would only be consulted if there was a security problem.

Pontoon Water: Full water supply to all jetties was switched back on following the end of the January snow and ice spell, but it will be shut off again in the event of freezing temperatures being forecast over several days. As before, the exception will be the tap on the first bollard of each pontoon which has a heat trace. This, with a bit of cooperation between moorers in joining up hoses where needed, should maintain water supplies to all boats.

Boat Licences: CRT come to the Marina every two months to check boat licences and this is done with the Marina's full co-operation. All boats should be CRT licensed and this is part of each mooring contract. On the recent visit 17 boats were found without licences. Moorers were reminded that current navigation licences are a condition of mooring at Mercia. Whilst enforcement lies principally with CRT the marina has a definite interest.

Pontoon Washing: All pontoons and jetties will be jet washed next Autumn. It makes a big difference to safety by getting rid of the lichens that cause slipperiness. Last year all pontoons were washed but only jetties requested by boat



owners were washed and, in the light of the number of other boat owners now asking for their jetties to be washed, the decision had been taken to do all of them.

Site Security: All moorers/lodge owners should be on hand to let visitors onto the

site. Visitors should not be driving through the gates by following a key-fob holder. The security of the site is important to all and everyone is asked to take responsibility for that. There will be a number of spot check days at the gates to ensure all those coming on site are either moorers/lodgers or have the Office's permission. So if you don't have your windscreen badge and you don't carry a key fob, now might be a good time to visit the Office to get these.

Cycle Racks: Further cycle racks had been asked for by the superberths and at the end of A Pontoon (semi-circular car park area). These will be provided since the racks were fully used and treated well by cycle owners at the Marina.



FORUM REPRESENTATIVES

Finch, Grebe, Heron

Nigel Hunt NB MaryAnn

Email: nbmaryann@gmail.com

Ibis, Jay, Kingfisher, Lapwing, Moorhen

Celia Kind of NB Bluebell.

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Nuthatch, Owl, Peregrine, Quail

Lee Bartlett NB La Pirogue.

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Redshank, Sandpiper, Teal

vacant

Upland Goose, Veery, Woodcock, Xantus

Richard Tandy NB Mystic River

Email: explugger@btopenworld.com

Yellowhammer, Zebra Dove, Avocet,

Blackbird, Albatross, Bullfinch

Mike Coates of NB Aphrodite

Email: mike.coates@hotmail.co.uk

Mercia Marina Lodges

Martin Stirling, Beech Lodge.

Email: mart.stirling@btinternet.com

? Quiz Night ?

The next Quiz Night will be on Wednesday, 27th of February in The Willows Tea Rooms. Quiz starts at 7.30 p.m. (doors open at 7.15). Space is limited, so if you would like to enter a team (£1 per person) please book with Lucy (lucy@merciamarina.co.uk) or pop into the Office. If you don't have a full team, you can be joined up with others, so let the Office know. Complementary drinks and snacks courtesy of the Marina round off an evening of fun!!

Wetland Birds' Survey

The latest survey/count was on Sunday 13th January. Nine species of wetland and sixteen species of farm/song birds were recorded (including a kingfisher). Two Lesser Redpolls were seen - a first for the Marina. The next walk/survey/count will be on Sunday 10th February. Come and join us!



Do You Sweep Your Chimney?

Sweeping the flue should be at least a yearly event- and more often if you are using the fire more or less daily, or burn



damp wood or certain types of solid fuel. Then you really do need to be sweeping your flue once a month. It's best

done with a proper chimney brush- which some chandlers sell (Midland Chandlers do), though some use a modified toilet brush (on a mop handle) or even with splayed copper cabling on a broom handle! Or borrow a neighbour's brush. If you have a bend in your flue pipe, then the proper kit might be more appropriate- and it's easier to do from outside the boat! Within the stove, it is worth removing the draught diverter- the piece of metal, depending on the fire, that is below the flue. Taking this out makes it easier to remove the soot as it falls. If you line the (already emptied) firebox with a plastic bag, it make catching the soot easier. Sweep the chimney first *in situ*, then remove it to sweep the flue. If you have a back boiler, it can trap some soot so sweep that down as well.

Every now and then, do a full inspection - the firebricks for damage, the seals on the door and ash pan, plus the seals around any alternative flue outlet blanks- for instance, if you have a top flue. If anything is damaged, get it fixed while the stove is quite clean.

The joint between the stove and flue, and flue and chimney collar should also be checked as well as the draught control/damper for the stove.

Finally - make sure you have a working carbon monoxide detector on your boat, as well as a smoke alarm.

A Cautionary Tale

Paul (nb Y Ddraig Camlas) sent in a warning last year, plus a photograph of a horrifying solid plug of sooty deposit!

"A friend's chimney is a good cautionary tale! The boat's previous owner had always used 'smokey' bituminous coal mixed with wood and burned the stove slowly over night. This had led to a build up of deposits in the chimney and left a 'flueway' of about 1" diameter in a five inch flue.



"The first Rob knew about it was in the cold weather before Christmas when he used the stove for the first time. The fire struggled to burn, wouldn't stay in overnight and the CO alarm kept going off. It took two days' hard work to clear flue. So a smoking chimney may look traditional but burning bituminous coal and wood can be very dangerous for your health as well as the local atmosphere. To everyone I would say burn smokeless fuel and sweep your chimney monthly if you use it daily."

Derbyshire Wildlife Trust and Bat Conservation Group

Bob Acrey of the Wildlife Trust came to the Willows on Thursday, 24 January to talk to some two dozen moorers about the work of the Trust and its presence across in the



county. It has a variety of roles - caring for the 42 nature reserves, keeping an eye on all planning applications which may affect the wildlife, running an education programme and raising awareness of the Trust, undertaking special projects and lobbying where needed.

Steve Roe, Derbyshire Bat Conservation Group, then spoke about Bats and his work with the Marina over the last year. There have been a number of surveys and he has left bat monitors on two of the boats. To date he has recorded seven different species of bat using the Marina for foraging and, with the help of a number of Volunteers from both the Marina and Findern Footpaths Group, got a lot closer to identifying roosting sites in the vicinity. With the evening hosted by Jules and coffee and biscuits in good supply, it was a good evening!

The next session will be on Wednesday, 6th March when the speaker is Bill Cove, Head Ranger at Calke Abbey. All are welcome so do come along - just pop into the Office let Jules Aucott know so that she can get the numbers right for coffee!



Discount Card

This is now available to six-month moorers, so call at the Office if you qualify and would like one. Next month's Newsletter will give a full listing of all the benefits available to moorers/lodgers.



Art Competition 2013

Mercia Marina is again joining with Willington Arts Festival to host an Art Competition.



This year's theme is "Water Living" represented in one of several media categories. The closing date will be the end of April. Full details are on posters and in the Office so please call by

and get your creative juices flowing!

Feed the Birds - Part II

There is a saying "Giving Swans white bread is like giving chocolate to dogs". It's not quite as bad as that but certainly white bread doesn't have a lot going for it. If you



change to brown or wholemeal bread (making sure it's not mouldy) you'll be doing a lot better for our swans,

ducks, coots, moorhens, geese and other visitors. The best food is wheat and cracked corn (maize); chicken feed in fact. Greens such as lettuce or raw spinach (chopped or torn to beak sized bits) are excellent. You can also feed them boiled or raw potatoes; these are full of carbohydrates and are an excellent winter feed. And bananas past their best will be very popular (do take their skins off first!). Don't throw any of this into deep water - it will just sink. Scatter on the grass close to the water's edge.

We have got stocks of wheat and maize in and have been given sacks of potatoes (riddlings). Supplemented by some greens when we have them, we are starting to feed the water birds at the end of the promontory. There is no huge need yet but the idea is to get them used to it before any bad weather does come. And, in those circumstances, any overflying visitors will spot the handouts and come down to join in. If you'd like to be part of this, or have feed to contribute, tell Jules in the Office.

